GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:428
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2009
REGISTRATION OF BIRTH
Gandhi Smt. Maneka Sanjay

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

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(a) Whether the United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) in their Report has concluded that India accounts for more than half of the unregistered births in the world, leaving children beyond the reach and protection of State services and unable to attend school or access basic healthcare;

(b) If so, whether the Government has identified the reasons for lack of registration of births; and

(c) If so the steps taken/being taken by the Government to encourage registration at the time of birth;

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) A report of UNICEF titled `Progress for Children: A Report Card on Child Protection` released in September 2009 has reported that an estimated 47% of the children born in 2007 who were not registered are South Asian. Of these 24 million children, 16 million are from India. It is also reported that such children are often put beyond the reach of protection and services to which they have a right, such as health care and education.

b) The Ministry of Home Affairs has reported that the major causes for low level of birth registration include:
lack of awareness among general public about the importance and need for registration.
Low priority assigned to civil registration work by States.
Inadequate allocations in State Budgets.
Lack of procedural knowledge among the registration functionaries.
Inadequate manpower at the local registration levels.

c) The Ministry of Home Affairs has reported that several steps are being taken by the office of Registrar General, India to strengthen birth registration. These include the following:
$ In order to clear the backlog of issuance of birth certificate to children in the age group of 0-10 years a national campaign was launched in November 2003. About 37.3 million birth certificates were issued in the first phase upto March 2005 and 26 million birth certificates were issued in the second phase upto October 2007.
$ Several publicity measures were undertaken to create awareness among public on the importance/need for registration of births. Publicity campaigns have been intensified on radio and television.
$ IEC materials have been created in regional languages and widely distributed.
$ A system of monthly monitoring has been established in low performing States to enhance coverage, ensure efficient working of the system and better reporting from these States.
$ Capacity building programmes have been organized for functionaries to strengthen their knowledge of civil registration.
$ Workshops/Conferences have been organized at national level to collectively review the working of Civil Registration System in various States.